

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 00262 250714Z

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SUBJECT: CHANGE IN EAST JERUSALEM SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

REF: STATE 40821#

1. SUMMARY. REPORT CONCERNING CHANGE IN CURRICULUM IN EAST JERUSALEM SECONDARY SCHOOLS IS CORRECT. BEGINNING WITH NEXT SCHOOL YEAR IN SEPTEMBER, EAST JERUSALEM PUBLIC JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS WILL OFFER CURRICULUM VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL TO JORDANIAN CURRICULUM OFFERED PRIOR TO JUNE 1967 WITH ADDITION OF ONLY TWO OBLIGATORY COURSES - HEBREW LANGUAGE AND CIVICS. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER SEVERAL EARLIER STEPS IN THAT DIRECTION, ISRAELI AUTHORITIES HAVE DECIDED WITH START OF NEXT SCHOOL YEAR TO OFFER CURRICULUM IN EAST JERUSALEM PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL TO THAT OFFERED UNDER JORDANIAN JURISDICTION (AND STILL IN USE IN WEST BANK SCHOOLS) WITH ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT ONLY THAT ALL PUPILS TAKE HEBREW LANGUAGE AND JUNIOR HIGH PUPILS TAKE CIVICS COURSE. LATTER RELATES TO ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK OF ISRAELI STATE, INCLUDING COURTS AND HISTADRUT. THERE WILL BE NO REQUIREMENT TO STUDY SUCH THINGS AS JEWISH HISTORY AND

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PAGE 02 JERUSA 00262 250714Z

ZIONISM.

3. CURRICULUM OFFERED IN ISRAELI ARAB SCHOOLS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE AS ALTERNATIVE, BUT EAST JERUSALEM SCHOOL SOURCES ASSUME THAT PRACTICALLY ALL STUDENTS WILL CHOOSE "JORDANIAN" OVER ISRAELI OPTION UNLESS THEY WISH TO OBTAIN ISRAELI MATRICULATION CERTIFICATE TO ENTER ISRAELI UNIVERSITY.

4. FOLLOWING GOI OCCUPATION OF EAST JERUSALEM IN 1967, ISRAELI ARAB CURRICULUM WAS INTRODUCED INTO EAST JERUSALEM SCHOOLS. ISRAELI MATRICULATION CERTIFICATE TO WHICH THIS COURSE LED WAS NOT ACCEPTED FOR ENTRANCE INTO ARAB UNIVERSITIES, HOWEVER, LEADING MANY STUDENTS TO TRANSFER TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS WHERE THEY WOULD BE PREPARED FOR EXAM FOR JORDANIAN MATRICULATION CERTIFICATE. (GOI HAS IMPOSED NO REQUIREMENTS RE CURRICULUM OFFERED IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS.) THIS LED TO CHANGE IN 1969 WHEREBY STUDENTS COULD TAKE, IN ADDITION TO REGULAR CURRICULUM, COURSE ENABLING THEM TO OBTAIN JORDANIAN CERTIFICATE. ADDITIONAL 6-10 HOURS PER WEEK OF STUDY WAS HEAVY BURDEN FOR MANY. MIXED CURRICULUM, INCLUDING COURSES DRAWN FROM BOTH ISRAELI ARAB AND JORDANIAN CURRICULAE, WAS THEREFORE INTRODUCED TWO YEARS AGO. THIS ALSO PROVED UNSATISFACTORY TO ARAB EDUCATORS IN EAST JERUSALEM, BOTH BECAUSE OF CONTENT AND WHAT THEY THOUGHT WAS STILL TOO HEAVY CLASSROOM SCHEDULE.

5. LATEST CHANGE WILL RESULT IN REDUCTION OF TWO TO SIX HOURS PER WEEK IN NUMBER OF REQUIRED HOURS DEPENDING ON CLASS, ACCORDING TO SPOKESMAN FOR EDUCATION MINISTRY. IT WILL NOT AFFECT PRIMARY SCHOOLS, TO WHICH EAST JERUSALEM ARAB EDUCATORS HOPE JORDANIAN CURRICULUM WILL ALSO EVENTUALLY BE EXTENDED.

6. GOI REVIEWS TEXTBOOKS AND REMOVES MATERIAL CONSIDERED TO BE ANTI-ISRAELI OR "INCITEMENT". THIS HAS REPORTEDLY NOT BEEN SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM, HOWEVER; EDUCATION MINISTRY SPOKESMAN INDICATED DELETIONS RARELY NECESSARY.

7. COMMENT: JERUSALEM MUNICIPALITY HAS BEEN BEHIND EFFORTS OVER PERIOD OF TIME TO REINSTATE BASICALLY "JORDANIAN" CURRICULUM IN EAST JERUSALEM SCHOOLS. IT APPEARS TO HAVE LARGELY ACHIEVED ITS OBJECTIVES BUT SEEMS TO BE LEAVING IT TO EDUCATION MINISTRY TO TAKE MAIN CREDIT, PRESUMABLY TO MINIMIZE POSSIBLE ADVERSE ISRAELI REACTION. HEADMASTER OF RASHADIYA HIGH SCHOOL FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 03 JERUSA 00262 250714Z

BOYS IN EAST JERUSALEM - LARGEST SCHOOL AFFECTED - HAS PUBLICLY PRAISED MAYOR TEDDY KOLLEK, HOWEVER, FOR HIS HELP IN EFFECTING CURRICULUM CHANGE. IT HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME NEGATIVE REACTION FROM RIGHT-WING ISRAELI CIRCLES, BUT THIS HAS SO FAR NOT DEVELOPED. JERUSALEM MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES HAVE DESCRIBED CURRICULUM CHANGE AS EXTENSION OF OPEN BRIDGES POLICY, AIMED AT PROVIDING EAST JERUSALEM RESIDENTS EASIER ACCESS TO ARAB WORLD, WHILE EDUCATION MINISTRY OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF ARAB EDUCATION, EMMANUEL KOPLEVITZ, HAS TERMED CHANGE STEP TOWARD CULTURAL PLURALISM. "WE DON'T WANT TO IMPOSE ON THEM SOMETHING

THEY DON'T WANT," HE IS QUOTED IN JERUSALEM POST.
NEWLIN

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